The finished poles for the framework, !ha/nagu, are sunk in the earth vertically, making a circle with a diameter of 3 and 1/2 to 5 meters. They use from 20 to 60 poles, depending on the size of the hut. The upright parts form the framework for the walls and the thin curved ends the framework for the roof. The whole structure looks like a beehive. The finished framework looks like a wide-meshed woven net. It is about 2 and 1/2 meters high on the average. [229] Wherever the poles meet or cross, they are tied together with thongs or bast strings. The poles with a flat arc which go into the ground at a sharp angle and form the lower part of the wall are specially designated as *!na/nihaigu. There are usually four pairs of these. Larger huts sometimes are given necessary support by a pole the thickness of an arm which is sunk upright into the ground in the middle of the hut and supports the middle of the roof. The Bechuan hut also has this feature. Correspondingly it is called *≠gurihaib or kx̃a!nab, also */naĉhaib, because it stands in the "navel" of the hut. The men build the framework of the hut.

b) The mats which form the roof and walls are made by the women. The material for making the mats is furnished by a reed grass, usually called rush, a Mariscus species, of the Cyperus genus from stalks glistening with fat and therefore called /hu· mi·haru s by the Hottentots. The plant is abundant in watery places. [Picture. Cyperus, Reed for a Mat Hut.] [Picture. Bone Needle for Sewing Mats. a) side view, b) full view. 2/3 natural size.]

The reeds are pulled out one by one (not cut) and put aside until dried.

Piercing and hemming (kx̃u·iam or *kx̃u·im) a mat requires a great deal of work. The woman sits in the manner described earlier (cf. p. 181) on a skin on the ground. The mat she is making lies in front of her, irregularly rolled up. She takes about 20 reeds from a loose heap, which is piled up beside her, places the bundle in front of her feet, adds the new reeds to those already bound. The toes of her right foot hold the reeds in the desired position on the ground while she is doing this. To sew the reeds together she uses a bone needle, */kx̃a·ru nã·b, made from a rib or a leg bone. The woman holds the threaded bone needle with her left hand and with her right she pushes 3 to 5 reeds at a time over the point to that they are pierced through. [230] Then the speared reeds are drawn off the needle onto the bast thread and added to the ones already in a row.*

*In Little Namaland I saw that the mats are not pierced by the threaded needle but by a

flat iron awl. The awl was placed on a slant so a path for the thread would be held open. A reed was threaded instead of a needle and then worked into the opening. The Little Namaland people call this reed /kʸo-rereb, but the Topnaars use this word to designate the end of the bast thread that is threaded into the bone needle. 342 285

When a few thousand reeds are lined up in this manner, they are pierced and sewn again in reverse order a few centimeters from the first row of sewing (see the arrows in the illustration). This is repeated in alternate directions until each meter long reed is pierced 16 to 18 times.

The free ends of the reeds are now bound together as the picture shows either in pairs or in threes and tied to the outer sewing thread all along the mat. Whatever part of the reed sticks out beyond this hem is cut off evenly with a knife leaving an amount the breadth of a finger. [Picture. Piercing and Hemming the Mats (Plan). a) Reed, b) Sewing Thread, c) Hem Thread.]

The mat is now ready for use. It is generally called /haru-b (3. st.). A mat called !gũ/b is prepared from considerably longer and stronger reeds.

The length of the mat varies with the size of the hut (it must span the whole dome in one piece) and depending on the mat's position on the dome, is between 4 and 8 meters long and not quite 1 meter wide.

The reeds in the mat are placed only sufficiently close together to keep out direct sunlight. They let in enough scattered rays through the cracks to light up the hut pleasantly and also enough air to ventilate it. In comparison, the clay hut of the Herero is gloomy and dank but offers better protection against the rain. Only when it drizzles slowly and the mat has time to swell do the reeds contract to form a rainproof roof. [231] A mat lasts 10 to 15 years. When it reaches that worthy age it is called /ha-mi. [171]

c) The mat is fastened to the framework with straps or bast threads to the loops of the sewing threads that stick out like handles, in other words along the narrow sides of the mat. Mats (usually three) are hung (!na/ni) with their long sides parallel to the ground from the bottom of the hut wall to about the height of a man. They thus embrace the framework like a crown. The edges overlap a great deal. The other 342 [283]

All skins which are to be cut into straps are prepared in this way. 281
An entire ox or oryx skin is cut into one long strip starting at the edge 283
and going in an increasingly narrow spiral (//hari-, vb.). Further preparation varies depending on whether the straps are for packs or for oxen.

[236] a) The pack strap, !ga/e!hau/b, must be flat, so that it lies 281
properly on the beast of burden and does not chafe by rolling. There- 492
fore, in contrast to the ox straps, it is not twisted. [Picture. Net Bag Knotted from Skin Strips. 1/7 Natural Size.] Because the irregular outer contour of the skin, the raw strap is cracked in many places and has corners that splay outwards. It takes a whole day to snip away the irregularities and stretch the twisted parts smooth. The finished strap is about 2 1/2 centimeters wide. The scraps are made into hobbles [Spannfesseln] or nose straps for the oxen that are ridden.

b) For making ox straps (forehead straps for tying up oxen), the spiral strips that are cut wet from the stinking skin are hung up on an overhanging branch of a strong tree as shown in the illustration and weighted down. A piece of wood the size of a man's leg and bent like a knee is fastened with straps to a large heavy stone. The turning stick is placed between the wood and the stone. The man goes round and round like a donkey around a tread mill, until the long strips of skin that hang down loosely next each other are shortened to a firmly twisted rope. [Picture. Twisting the Ox Straps]. Then the man pulls out the stick, lets the overwound rope unwind and then twists it again in the opposite direction. From time to time the [237] rope is rubbed with fat. This work is continued for 4 to 5 days and by then the strap is round, firm and pliant. It is then divided up into individual ox straps. Whether this method of preparing leather was original with the Hottentots or whether they borrowed it, seems to be uncertain. I saw [171] Boers as well as Bechuans (in Kanya) preparing leather ox straps in the same way.

c) Straps for sewing shoes (!ã·gu) are made preferably from the 281
skins of the steinbok, whips, sa/migu, are woven from goat leather, 283
probably following the example of the Boers. The kudu bull supplies 492
the best material for the whip end. The genuine sjambok, !na/ba·b is cut from hippopotamus skin.

d) Women and girls make their front apron (here specially called 294
/a·bib* in the following way. [Picture. Apron Front of the Girls. 1/4 natural size.]

*One has tried to connect the word /a·bib, 196
a woman's front apron with various word stems.

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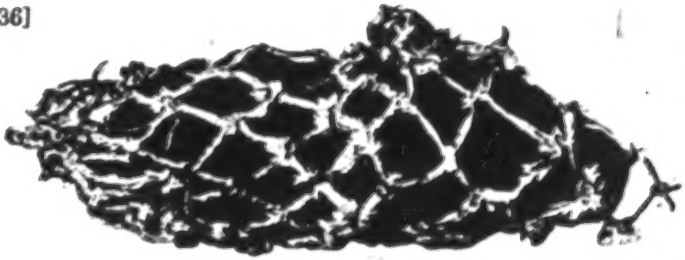
[236]



Net bag knotted from skin strips.
1/7 natural size.

Twisting the ox straps.

word stem doro- which means "to bore." That is a vestige from the time when the original means for making fire, long since in disuse, were little boring sticks such as the Bushmen still use today (cf. Kalahari).

b) The upper leather is cut from the stomach skin of an oryx, a cow, or young calves. If absolutely necessary they use the fresh skin of old animals. The treatment is the same as that for knapsack leather. [Picture. Doro //hõ/s, about 1/4 natural size.]

c) The half-grown Hottentot cuts his back apron from the skins of a goat, steinbok or klipspringer. (cf. Plate XI). Sometimes three long straps about 4 centimeters wide hang from the bottom edge of the apron down to the ground. They consider it decorative when the straps flap in the wind.

C. Rope Making

The building of huts and the making of useful skin and leather objects (called sa-ran, when they are used directly on the body as covers or clothing) require rope and thread. The sinews of wild and domestic animals supply the best thread for sewing skins together. But for sewing mats together bast thread, tsu-rib, not sinew thread, //aba-b, is used.

The best material for making rope is furnished by the Acacia horrida Willd. The freshly topped branches are cleaned of twigs and thorns and quickly drawn through the hot ashes of the fire. The bark is then banged loose from the wood at one end of the branch, freed with the finger nails and pulled off in strips.

The rest is women's work. The outer bark, soro-b and the layer of red bark lying underneath, *basib (probably borrowed) are not used for making rope. Only the innermost white layer, which is easily slit off, is usable. From these white fibers, /a/b, the wet [242] layer that lies directly next to the wood is separated from the outer, tougher layer that is not wet. The fibers are hung up to dry, later softened again in lukewarm milk (in an emergency in water), put in the mouth in lumps, sucked dry, and chewed up. Now the fibres are ready to be twisted into rope.

The following work the women do not like to do and sometimes refuse to do in the presence of young men. Sitting sideways on the floor, they bare one of their legs nearly to the hips.

they bare one of their legs nearly to the hips. The flat surface of the leg 283
serves as a base for their work. Two bast fibres are stretched out across the leg, held between the fingers of the left hand and with the right hand rolled firmly over the skin of the leg so that each fibre twists over itself. During this rolling motion towards the knee each of the two fibres is twisted individually. They are rolled back immediately which twists them together into one thread.

They solve the problem of making one long knotless string many meters in length out of hundreds of short fibres in the following way: [Picture. Twisting of Long Strings From Short Threads (plan)].

1. (See Figure I.) The end of thread a, which is to be lengthened, is spread out in a fork shape. Thread b, also spread in a fork shape, is placed on thread a so that its longer tine lies on the shorter tine of thread a and its shorter tine is on thread a's longer one. Thread b_1 is half as large as a.

2. (See Figure II.) Each fork that consists of two fibres or threads that lie loosely beside each other (until *) is twisted into one thread by rolling it towards the knee. The reverse rolling makes the twisted tines into a single piece of thread. Thread b_1 is now anchored. The free end of thread a is now forked making two tines, one longer than the other. The latter now is attached to the free end of thread b_1.

3. (See Figure III.) A double rolling motion brings the loose ends together to **, making a new piece of thread. The longer piece of thread b_2 is placed on the last little end of thread a, and the shorter side of thread b_2 is placed on the free end of thread b_1 and all these pieces are twisted together to one piece of thread to ***. [Picture. A net bag of sinews. 1/6 natural size.]

In this way all the shorter threads are twisted into one string, the strength of which leaves nothing to be desired. [Picture. Making the sinew knots in the net bag.] [Picture. Joining the net stitches at one of the two ends of the bag. 2/3 natural size.]

The only useful object made exclusively [244] of sinews (and 283
preferably from those of an oryx) is a large net bag, ≠ûi-s, which is 415
used in the hut as a kind of bag drawer for keeping all kinds of things. 286
When traveling it is used as a rucksack for bedding. A similar bag is 484
also knotted from narrow strips of chamois skin.

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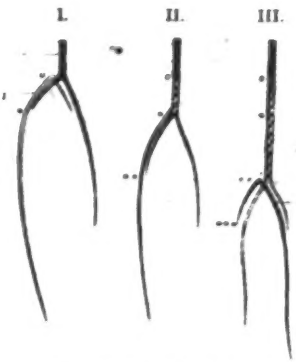
[p.242]



Twisting of long strings from short threads (plan).

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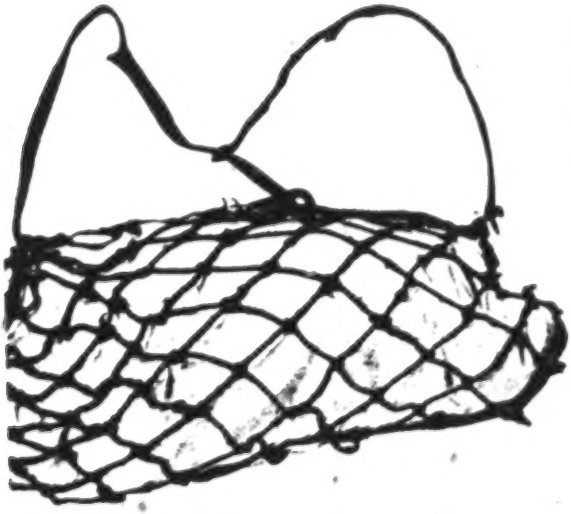
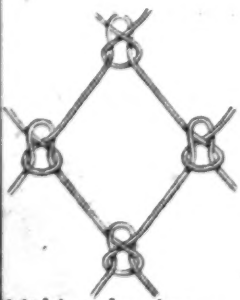
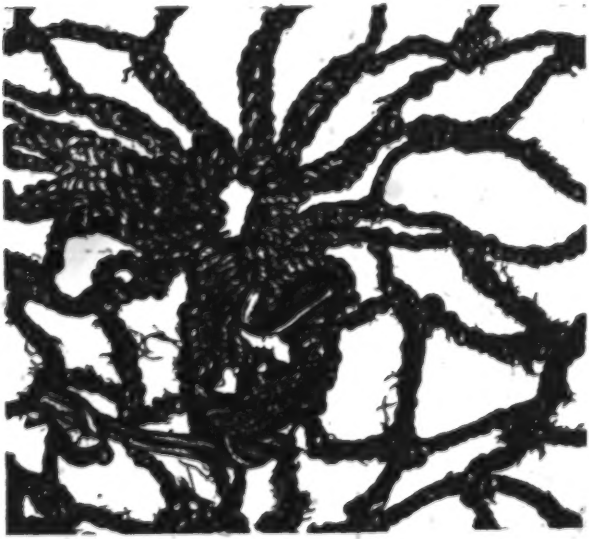
[243]



A net bag of sinews. 1/6 natural size.



Making the sinew knots in the net bag.



Joining the net stitches at one of the two ends of the bag. 2/3 natural size.

*539 "mouth part") of the ax broke (*kχõ̃a). Then he said: "How (matisa) is this, mother?" (ais). And she replied: "That [is] no (toma "not," ĩ, suff. of the 3rd pers. sing. neut.) thing that is supposed (nĩ, verbal particle of the fut.) to sound (*!naũ) like that (tĩ) [when it] talks" (mĩ). Then they uncovered it and saw that (!kχaiẽ) it was a stone. Then they killed (!gam) the woman (tarasa) immediately (/ãse) and ate (õ) her up.

[396] [Text omitted]

Translation of II

The Two Women Who Were Taken Along by Aigamuchab

And it happened this way (hĩhe "was done"): Two (/gam) women (kχoẽra) had gotten lost (!kχoẽ "to hurry," /ari "to lose"). And they came (/kχĩ) to (ai) the place (!kχaib) where Aigamuchab refused (//hã, ta = ra) cattle food (//ũna, neut. pl.).* Then they

[283 824]

*The smooth, shiny, yellowish, innermost layer of fibers of the bark of the thorn tree, which tastes sweet, is sucked and then twisted into twine.

[called]: "Man, [you] who (-ẽ, suff. of the 3rd pers. sing. neut.) are hammering (!gõ!gõ) there (nẽba), take (ũ) us* to the (//ga) kraal!" (//gaũs, p. 232).

*Literally: "one," kχoẽẽ = "person" in the neut. sing., corresponding to our impersonal "one." This indefinite manner of expression is preferred to the personal pron. of the 1st pers. if the request is made to a stranger. In this form I heard women ask strange Hottentots for tobacco.

2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date) 1930
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Nama

281 making the front apron of the women. Others are still converted into bags for holding discarded odds and ends which may later be useful. Two skins are fitted and sewn together all round the edges, except for a small opening left at one side and just big enough to admit the hand. Others again are made into pillows, by cutting two skins into squares of the same size, which are sewn together round three of the edges, the interior then filled in with feathers or hair, and the remaining side finally closed up. Ox or gemsbok hides similarly treated are cut in ever-narrowing spirals from the edges inwards into long strips. These are used as binding-thongs, or else are twisted into ropes for securing oxen. In the latter case the wet newly-cut strip is suspended from the branch of a tree, twisted round tightly and weighted down by means of a heavy stone attached to the lower end. It is then continuously twisted in alternate directions by means of a stick inserted just above the fastening to the stone, until at the end of four or five days the rope is permanently round, hard, and supple. It is then cut up into the lengths desired. Lashes for whips are made in the same way, and plaited together.

In other cases the skin of the animal is not specially treated, but is simply converted into bags of various kinds, such as knapsacks for carrying objects needed on the march, and smaller bags for *buchu* roots, herbs, tobacco and so on. An interesting bag of this kind is
281 415 that used for holding milk or water. A freshly-killed goat, calf, gemsbok, or steenbok is cut open all along one side, from the left foreleg right up to the shoulder. Through this opening the whole body is shelled from the skin, head and legs having been first cut off. Then all the openings are sewn up, with the exception of that for the right foreleg, which serves as a spout for pouring the liquid in and out, and has a stone cork which can easily be tied fast. The fresh skin is turned inside out, the inner side cleaned of all particles of flesh and fat, and then it is dried. The hairs remain on the inner side of the bag.

283 [824] The thread with which skin objects are sewn together is generally animal sinew, and so formerly was the bowstring. Strings of varying thickness are also made from the bark fibre of the *Acacia horridâ Willd.* The branches of the tree are chopped off by the men, freed of all twigs and thorns, and rapidly passed through the hot ashes of a fire; then the bark is loosened at one end by hammering, and the whole pulled off in strips with the hands. Next the women separate the innermost white layer of fibre from the rest of the bark, and after

2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date) 1930
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Nama
Cape Hottentots

letting it dry soak the mass in lukewarm milk or water, then suck it and chew it in small lumps. A length of prepared fibre is then taken and twisted between the palm of the right hand and the naked thigh, the end of the fibre being held in the left hand. This done, the process is repeated with other lengths of fibre, the lengths being joined up as occasion arises, until sufficient has been made. The resulting string is strong and even, comparing very well with the machine-made article. It is used as thread for sewing together the reed mats for the huts, as well as for making the snares required by the hunter. From it are also knotted net bags, used in the hut for holding various odds and ends, and serving on the march as a rucksack for the skin blankets. Baskets, sieves, and fish-traps woven from reed and flexible twigs are mentioned by some writers, but no description is given of their manufacture.[1]

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The art of making pottery, formerly found among all the Hottentots, was lost soon after the Europeans came among them, although as late as the early years of last century earthenware vessels made by themselves were still noted among the Naman. From the descriptions available of these pots, as well as from specimens found or preserved, it seems that in shape and manner of construction they are generally similar to those formerly found among the Cape Bushmen. The most common form is that of a large-bellied urn with narrow rounded base, small mouth, and two ears through which a cord can be passed in order to suspend it. Other pots of the same style are quite cylindrical, with almost flat bases, while in others the base is slightly rounded and larger than the rest of the pot. They are often ornamented round the neck with rows of dots or short broad lines, apparently produced by incising. They are unglazed and generally somewhat thick, although a few have been found rather thin and evenly built throughout.[2]

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[178]

Kolb states that each family among the Cape Hottentots made its own pots, modelled by hand by the women. The clay was obtained from termite heaps, cleared of sand and gravel, and kneaded together with the ants' eggs mixed in it. A lump was placed on a smooth flat stone and modelled into the shape required. Next it was carefully smoothed inside and outside by hand, and exposed to the sun for a couple of days. When perfectly dry, it was finally put in a

[1] Schultze, op. cit., 241–4.
[2] Schlenker, "Hottentot and Bushman Pottery in the Collection of the Albany Museum," 25–32, pl. II; Schultze, op. cit., 246 and fig.

5: Vedder M-5 (ca. 1910) 1928
FX13 Hottentot FX13
NAMA

415 The earthen pots made of clay and burnt by the women,
177 which belonged to the furniture of a fully equipped house in earlier days, have long since given way to the metal pots of the trader. The paint-box, or rather "vanity bag," however, has been preserved. It consists of a small tortoise-shell of which the opening at the back as well as the two openings at the sides are closed with resin, so that a vessel with only one opening, namely that for the head, remains.
[302] In this receptacle they preserve the buchu-powder comprising a mixture of various powdered aromatic shrubs, with which they powder their bodies, in order to remove the smell of perspiration. Men very seldom indulge in the use of this powder. The "box" is suspended by a little leather strap from the framework of the hut—and this is where all their other trifles are kept—or it is worn round the necks of the women for decorative purposes. For conveying their drinking water they used ostrich egg shells in former days, which, however, have long since been replaced by tin cans, buckets and paraffin-tins. Up to the present day they still manufacture the wooden spoons used for dishing up food. For eating purposes, however, the tin spoon has been adopted. It not seldom happens that quite a number of people in want of sufficient spoons use one and the same in turn passing it from hand to hand.

415 The "fat-box" must also be mentioned. It was as long
302 as a man's finger and consisted of the central part of a clean horn, both ends of which had been cut off and then closed by means of pieces of ox-hide. In this box they had the reddish ointment which was applied to those parts of the face that got chapped during cold weather. The women and girls also applied this ointment to their faces on other occasions.

412 As recently as 50 years ago stone knives were still in use,
276 but have been displaced by bought knives. The old tobacco
411 pipe consisting of a hollow bone or artistically carved out of serpentine stone is becoming more and more rare. The club
177 is still being manufactured, and a short stick furnished with the tuft of a jackal's tail is still, as it used to be in by-gone days, the distinctive sign of a prominent man or youth, who wards off the flies and wipes off the sweat with it. Altogether the Nama are adepts at manufacturing a variety of useful utensils, but do not like the idea of having more furniture than is absolutely necessary.

463 3. As the principle of distribution of labour could scarcely be expected to obtain in this once nomadic tribe, everyone makes for himself what his household requires. They make
283 cunning cords from the fibres of different shrubs, which are used in making the matwork for their houses, and also thin
326 but strong strings which the hunters require for their snares.
177 The art of manufacturing bracelets and arrow-points from
000 copper and iron had been learnt from the Bergdama. Baskets

9: Ten Rhyne D-5 (1673) 1933
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Cape Hottentot

CHAP. XXV.

Arts and Crafts.

You might as well look for jewels in a sty as for arts in this degraded people. Since however they wear skins sewn together with the needle, they cannot be absolutely said to be without arts and crafts. Their needles are of iron (for they have mines and, as I guess, very rich ones) or of ivory, and for thread they use the sinews of animals. They shave their hair skilfully with sharp razors, whence it follows that they are acquainted not only with the tailor's and the barber's craft, but also with that of the smith.

Hence they are provoked to a certain flattering conceit of themselves, although in truth they are rude creatures with no tincture of any arts except the humblest. Thus one of their chiefs gazing at a watch, and instructed by the owner in the use of it, said: "Why should not the Hottentots also make ones as good?" Some manufacture and play a musical instrument with the appearance and function of a flute [53]). Some pretend to the use of magic and would have it that they can catch fish by playing on the flute [54]).

CHAP. XXVI.

Their medical practices.

It is claimed that the human race has learned many methods of healing from the brute creation: for instance, emetics from dogs; from the ibis, an Egyptian bird, the use of the clyster; from the hippopotamus, common in these parts, phlebotomy; from goats, the excellence of dittany; from swallows that of chelidony; from snakes of fennel; from toads of the narrow-leaved plantain; from the weasel of rue; from the stork of wild marjoram; from boars of ivy; from stags of the artichoke; for it is true that nature is the teacher of all these. Why, then, should we be surprised if these peoples, brutish though they be, have some method of healing? Like Podalirius and Machaon in the Trojan war who did not so much apply their remedies in pestilence or in every sort of disease, but were accustomed especially to treat wounds, as Celsus says. Thus suction and anointing are the chief, nay, the only remedies of the Hottentots, for all they fear is

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[53]) This may possibly refer to the reed pipes of the Hottentots, already described by Dapper. See above, p. 35.

[54]) I can find no confirmation for this statement.

[See 8: Dapper, this File, cat. 116, p. 35. – Analyst]